Transit-Times

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40th Anniversary:
Ferries, trains, buses
Served International Expo
Despite the best efforts of your staff, it is difficult to deal with. After about a week, numerous regular East Bay runs were started appearing on the regular transbay lines. It may only be my imagination, but I doubt it. If it is, indulge my illusions and take credit for seeing the problem and making the change anyway.

Michael B. Wilmar
Oakland

I am upset with the bus system since the accident with BART. I am an every day commuter on the O-Alameda and have had nothing but problems getting the bus at night. It was unfair to move the location where we catch our bus in the terminal. The BART (temporary shuttle) riders won't even let us through their line so we can catch our bus. I don't think it's fair you give convenience to the BART riders — they won't be riding AC once the BART transbay tube is fixed.

Catherine Darr
Alameda

(Ed Note: The change in location of some bus stops in the Transbay Transit Terminal was made to help regular AC Transit riders avoid the lines to the BART shuttle, which was instituted after interruption of transbay train service in mid-January. Some inconvenience to everyone involved has occurred since the sudden influx of thousands of extra commuters, but we have attempted to keep that inconvenience to a minimum.)

Quicker commutes

Bypass speeds up transbay service

A combination of fortunate factors — including a new bus bypass at the Bay Bridge Toll Plaza and close cooperation between public and private transit operators around the Bay — has greatly speeded the commute-hour bus trip from the East Bay to San Francisco. AC Transit and CALTRANS, with the assistance of law enforcement agencies, opened a buses-only access to the bridge on Feb. 12.

Buses in the transbay shuttle operated by AC Transit since the interruption of BART transbay train service in mid-January were immediately rerouted to use the exclusive access. And immediately, according to General Manager Robert E. Nisbet, the time required for westbound commute-hour trips was trimmed by ten to twenty minutes.

The exclusive access (via the West Grand Avenue Connector and the far right lane through the Toll Plaza) is available from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. weekdays — the time when freeways approaching the Bay Bridge are filled to capacity with slow-moving traffic.

Aids regular runs

AC Transit's regularly scheduled transbay bus lines have also been adjusted to operate via the bus-only westbound access. Commute morning, and riders on these lines also are enjoying substantially quicker trips to San Francisco. Buses in regular transbay service via the exclusive lane are taking 15 to 20 minutes. Nisbet reported to District Directors at their Feb. 14 meeting.

And buses making special morning commute trips from BART/MacArthur to the Transbay Transit Terminal arrive there in 13 to 18 minutes — about half the time a trip via the freeway and interchange would require, Nisbet said.

About 100 of these buses, provided for the temporary shuttle by AC Transit and other carriers, are serving some 11,000 peak-hour commuters on this speedy trip each weekday. Total patronage on the shuttle buses has been averaging over 35,000 riders a day.

More riders

Since the interruption of BART transbay service, ridership on AC Transit buses surged upwards by about 30 percent. Some 60,000 transbay passenger trips are being made each weekday.

Nisbet told Directors that CALTRANS initially announced that the new exclusive bus access — and the speedier morning commute trip — would be continued for the duration of the interruption on transbay train service.

The District intends to ask CALTRANS to continue the access after transbay train service is resumed, Nisbet said.

Directors adopt operating Estimate for fiscal year; Future financing uncertain

An operating estimate adopted by AC Transit directors for this fiscal year assures that bus service throughout the East Bay will be continued at current levels for the remainder of the fiscal period.

In presenting the estimate to directors at a Feb. 14 meeting, General Manager Robert E. Nisbet noted that it includes no projections for financing bus service after June 30, 1979.

While sufficient operating assistance was made available from State and Federal sources to continue service this fiscal year, the District has not received any assurance that assistance at sufficient levels will be continued in the coming year, Nisbet said.

The adopted estimate for the current fiscal period projects expenses (not including depreciation) at $63.6 million; revenues of $25.2 million; property taxes of $7.6 million; and State and Federal operating assistance of $30.8 million.
Greg Ford appointed to Grant application post

Gregory L. Ford, who joined the District in 1974 as project coordinator, has been appointed administrative projects manager.

In this position, Ford assumes responsibility for preparing and submitting applications for federal, state, and local aid in funding capital improvements and operating needs. The function also encompasses grant project management, acting as the District's liaison with major funding sources such as UMTA, MTC, and CALTRANS, and coordinating bidding and contract procedures for grant-funded purchases.

During five years in his previous position, Ford coordinated the processing of capital improvement grants totaling $35,420,000 and operating assistance grants totaling $18,952,890.

Before joining AC Transit, he was director of market research for World Airways. He is a graduate of Santa Clara University and of American Graduate School of International Management.

Maintenance retiree dies

Richard V. Collicott, 78, who retired as a mechanic at Emeryville Division in 1966, died January 20 in Oakland.

A native of England, Collicott joined Key System in 1938. He worked on trains until their phase-out in 1958 when his skills were put to use on buses. At the time of retirement, he had completed 28 years of service.

Collicott is survived by his widow, Annie Marian, and a son, Kenneth. The family home is in Albany, where, as a hobby, Collicott created ornamental ironwork.

The Troutts...
Workers in the Maintenance Department are back in the classroom this month, taking a refresher course in eye protection. The heart of this up-dated safety course is a film — "Don't Push Your Luck" — which graphically depicts the need for protecting one's eyes and the sometimes disastrous results of failing to do so.

"Safety glasses are low-cost protection," says Stanley O. Pearce, superintendent of the division, says he at-
ttributes the month's record to an excellent collective effort.

"Personnel here are aware of and interested in their duties and responsibilities," Grandison says. "And they are constantly becoming more and more professional in the performance of their duties."

Seminary and Newark Division drivers also registered well in January “safety bogey” statistics. Seminary drivers averaged 18,281 miles per mishap; Newark Division operators topped the standings with a 58,532-mile average for the month.

"Collective effort." Richmond achieves best-ever safety record

Richmond Division drivers set a new record in safe-driving statistics during January, averaging a total of 33,894 miles per chargeable accident.

This average, reflecting just a handful of accidents in almost half-a-million miles on the road, betters the District's monthly safety goal of 13,250 miles per mishap by a wide margin. And it is far superior to the division's previous "best-ever" average of 23,907 miles, set in January, 1977.

In expressing pride at the division's accomplishment, George Grandison, superintendent of the division, says he at-
Actions of the Board

At an adjourned regular meeting January 24, the Board of Directors:
  • Authorized General Manager to participate with Regional Transit Association in joint procurement of automotive filters, on motion of Director Rinehart.
  • Authorized General Manager to participate with Regional Transit Association in joint procurement of diesel fuel, on motion of Director Bettencourt.

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At a regular meeting February 14, the Board of Directors:
  • Authorized board members and four management representatives to attend APTA Western Conference in Albuquerque April 1-April 5, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
  • Authorized one management representative to attend APTA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C., March 5-7, on motion of Director Bettencourt.
  • Authorized adoption of deferred compensation plan, with administrative costs borne by enrolled employees; adopted Final Operating Estimate for Fiscal 1978-79 (See story, Pg. 3); authorized extending for a year the services of Arthur Young and Company, on motion of Director Rinehart.

District studies downtown Oakland shuttle

A proposal for shuttle bus service circling downtown Oakland at frequent intervals is now under study.

Presently, numerous bus lines serve the downtown area, linking it with the rest of the urban East Bay and with the Transbay Transit Terminal in San Francisco.

But no single bus line connects the area's four major centers of activity — the retail district along Broadway, the financial activities near Kaiser Center, the facilities around the Alameda County Courthouse at Lake Merritt, and Jack London Square.

This month, District Directors approved initiation of planning for special shuttle service connecting these areas with buses operating at ten-minute headways or less on a circular route.

The shuttle would operate in both directions on the proposed route — via Broadway, 20th Street, the two-way combination of Madison and Oak streets, and First Street.

District planners, working with the City of Oakland, should complete drafting of the proposed service by mid-year, after which a demonstration grant would be sought to fund the shuttle.